

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present application has been reviewed in light of the Final Office Action that was mailed March 17, 2009, the Advisory Action dated June 29, 2009, and the Examiner Interview of August 11, 2009. Claims 15-17, 19-22, and 25-32 are currently pending with claims 15 and 22 having been amended herein, and claims 1-14 having been canceled without prejudice herein. Applicant expressly reserves the right to pursue the canceled subject matter in one or more continuation applications. In view of the remarks and arguments presented herein below, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are allowable over the cited references of record, and accordingly, respectfully requests reconsideration and allowance of the above-identified application.

Applicant would like to thank Examiner Philogene for taking the time to discuss the present Advisory Action in a telephone interview held with Applicant's representative, Matthew S. Lowe, on August 11, 2009. Additionally, Applicant would like to thank Examiner Philogene for the indication that claims 15-17, 19-22, and 25-32 would be allowable if amended in the manner set forth herein.

In the Final Office Action, claims 1 and 3-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0158555 to Sanders et al. (hereinafter "Sanders") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,868,749 to Reed (hereinafter "Reed"). These rejections were sustained in the Advisory Action. With regard to the rejection of claims 1 and 3-14, in view of the cancellations thereof, the rejection is rendered moot and consequently should be withdrawn.

Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanders in view of Reed in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,096,060 to Fitts et al. (hereinafter "Fitts"). This rejection was sustained in the Advisory Action. With regard to the rejection of claim 2, in view of the cancellation thereof, the rejection is rendered moot and consequently should be withdrawn.

Claims 15-17, 19-22, and 25-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanders in view of Reed in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,248,054 to Becker (hereinafter "Becker"). This rejection was sustained in the Advisory Action. Independent claims 15 and 22 have been amended as suggested by the Examiner. As so amended, Applicant believes that claims 15 and 22 are each allowable over the art of record. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15 and 22 as being unpatentable under 35 U.S.C §103(a) over Sanders in view of Reed in view of Becker is respectfully requested.

Since claims 16-17, and 19-21 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 15, and contain all of the features of claim 15, for the reasons presented above regarding the patentability of claim 15, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 16-17 and 19-21 are also patentable under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanders in view of Reed in view of Becker.

Since claims 25-32 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 22, and contain all of the features of claim 22, for the reasons presented above regarding the patentability of claim 22, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 25-32 are also patentable under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sanders in view of Reed in view of Becker.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone interview may facilitate resolution of any outstanding issues, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone Applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

An early and favorable response on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'F. Sardone', is written over a horizontal line.

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